

# D5.9: Final conference and youth

[WP5 – Dissemination and Engagement]



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 822337.



**Populism and  
Civic Engagement**



**PaCE Conference**  
**15-18 November 2021**  
**Residence Palace, Brussels & Online**

### About this document

**Task Lead:** DS

**Contributors:** All partners

**Date:** April 2022

This document outlines the organisation and course of the final conference of PaCE project. Project final conference was set up in the hybrid format, consisting of in-person discussion roundtables taking place in Brussels and online webinars. The purpose of the final conference was to widely disseminate and discuss project outcomes with different actors.

Dissemination Level		
PU	Public on the <a href="#">PaCE website</a> .	X
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	-
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

A brief summary of revisions will be recorded in the table below.

HISTORY OF CHANGES			
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	KEY CHANGES	AUTHOR
V0.1	December 2021	Initial version	Sophie Kieusow, Demsoc
V0.2	April 2022	Review 1	Aleksandra Zietek, Demsoc

The working language of this document on PaCE Final conference is English (EN), as required for reporting purposes by article 20.7 of the Grant Agreement.



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## About the conference

The Populism and Civic Engagement (PaCE) conference was an event gathering project partners, academics, policy actors, journalists and civil society representatives to present and summarise findings on populism in Europe. It took place on 15-18 November 2021. Uncertainties and constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemics required us to redesign the conference format against the initial plan outlined in the project proposal. Due to travelling restrictions enforced by public and partner institutions, and the number of participants allowed for in-person events, it became unfeasible to organise a two-day conference in line with the target number of participants, including youth representatives. Therefore, we decided to organise the conference in a hybrid manner, splitting events into three days:

1st day - in-person roundtables (7) with invited speakers and guests in Brussels (Residence Palace)

2nd and 3rd day - online webinars (6) hosted by the project partners

This solution enabled the participation of partners and guests who could not take part in the conference physically. The in-person part of the conference was focused on inviting local, Brussels-based actors who were not affected by the travelling restrictions.

It was impossible to gather youth participants from across Europe to participate in the event for the reasons explained above. Instead, we decided to address the involvement of young people in the debate on populism by developing an educational scenario for schools and educational organisations that they could run in their environments. A detailed approach is presented in the corresponding deliverable 5.9.





## Conference Program

The Populism and Civic Engagement (PaCE) conference summarises research findings on populism in Europe, carried out within the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme.

Across Europe, there is a rise of political movements that claim to challenge liberal elites and speak for the ‘ordinary person’ – movements that can be loosely categorised as ‘populist’. Many of these movements have undesirable tendencies. PaCE project aims to combat the negative tendencies of populist movements, build upon the lessons of positive examples, and hence play a part in constructing a firmer democratic and institutional foundation for the citizens of Europe.

In this event, we aim to present findings from our research carried out by the PaCE consortium partner institutions and, together with participants and stakeholders, develop the approaches to connect research with policy-making.

Thematic tracks of the conference:

1. Understanding populism
2. New tools for understanding populism
3. Policy actors' response to populism

A dedicated website was developed to promote and recruit participants, built with the event management software B2Match: <https://pace-conference.b2match.io/>.

PaCE Consortium consists of:

- Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
- City of Reykjavik, Iceland
- The Centre for Liberal Strategies Foundation, Bulgaria
- The Paris-Lodron University, Austria
- The Technical University of Dresden, Germany
- The Democratic Society, Belgium
- Trilateral Research, Ireland
- University of Helsinki, Finland
- Citizens Foundation, Iceland

## Hybrid setup

Due to the uncertainty of the Covid-19 situation, consortium partners decided to host a hybrid conference, with both in-person and online sessions, divided into two parts:

A. Expert roundtables, in-person - 15 November 2021, Residence Palace, Brussels  
In-person sessions run by PaCE leaders with the invited stakeholders: policy experts, civil servants, journalists, academics, and civil society representatives.



## A. Online Seminars - 17-18 November 2021

Open online webinars and workshops run by the PaCE researchers.

Recordings from the webinars are publicly available on [PaCE Youtube Channel](#).

## Agenda

### Monday 15 November 2021 - Expert sessions:

- **Understanding individual characteristics of populists** - Reinhard Heinisch, University of Salzburg
- **Liberal Europe, no longer?** Co-organiser: European Policy Centre.
  - Takis S. Pappas, University of Helsinki; Yannis Palaiologos, EU Correspondent “Kathimerini”, Skai TV/Radio; Sophie Pornschlegel, Connecting Europe Project leader, Senior Policy Analyst at European Policy Centre; Moderator: Corina Stratulat, Head of European Politics and Institutions programme, Senior Policy Analyst at European Policy Centre.
- **Identifying and Analysing Causal Mechanisms of Populism**, Daniel Smilov & Ruzha Smilova, Centre for Liberal Strategies
- **Computational level and power - how to apply this**, Bruce Edmonds & Ruth Meyer, Manchester Metropolitan University
- **Future & foresight scenarios - How should policy actors react to populism?** Matthew Hall, Trilateral Research
- **Avenues of machine learning**, Sven Engesser, Professor of Communication, Technical University of Dresden
- **Citizen engagement in policymaking: learning from European and national examples**, Anthony Zacharzewski & Mel Stevens, Democratic Society

### 17 & 18 November 2021 - Online seminars:

- **Understanding the Populist Sympathizer**, Martin Dolezal & Marco Fölsch, University of Salzburg
- **Light spots through the cracking wall. From crisis to policy innovation for transformative change**, Roxana Elena Cziker, Research project manager at the City of Reykjavik
- **Simulating Politics - the agent-based simulation of voting behaviour**, Bruce Edmonds & Ruth Meyer, Manchester Metropolitan University
- **PaCE Dashboard - Populist & nativist topic trends 2014-2020**, Robert Bjarnason, CEO at Citizens Foundation Iceland
- **The ethics of making policy recommendations about populism**, David Barnard-Wills, Senior Research Manager at Trilateral Research
- **Centrist and radical populism in Central and Eastern Europe**, Daniel Smilov, Centre for Liberal Strategies

## Participants

For the conference as a whole, there were 77 registrations. There were 57 participants registered for the in-person conference. They gathered for the expert sessions on the day. The covid-19 situation resulted in fewer participants in in-person expert sessions, some due to cancellations. Overall, we are glad to gather such a total of people within the pandemic conditions.

Participants came from thirty different countries, with the highest numbers of registrations from Belgium (38 registered), the UK (13) and Bulgaria (12). The online seminars offered the opportunity for people from all over the world to join the sessions.

Participants of the in-person conference consisted of the following organisations or institutions:

- Article 7
- Australian National University
- Committee of the regions
- Council of Europe
- European Commission:
  - DG Research & Innovation
  - European Research Executive Agency
- European Ombudsman
- European Parliament
- European Policy Center
- European Ombudsman
- ORF, Media Austria
- Permanent representation of Hungary to the EU
- Université Libre de Bruxelles
- University of Iceland



Takis Pappas, Sophie Pornschlegel, Corina Stratulat and Yannis Palaiologos, during the session “*Liberal Europe, no longer?*” co-organized by the European Policy Centre.